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Letter dated 25 September 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The statement of Rexhep Meidani, President of the Republic of Albania, in the general debate of the fifty-fourth regular session of the United Nations General Assembly on 23 September 1999 is not a novelty in the overall behaviour of the Republic of Albania towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and comes as the last harangue in a string of falsehoods and undocumented allegations levelled against my country. It confirms the continuity of Albania's hostile policy and overt aspirations towards Kosovo and Metohija, an integral part of the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

By abusing the rostrum of the world parliament, President Meidani sought once again to divert the attention from the situation in his own country and, by attacking the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its leadership, to conceal the real role of the Republic of Albania in fomenting the crisis in the southern Serbian Province, which came as a culmination of decades-long Albanian territorial aspirations towards this part of the integral territory of the sovereign Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

By falsely accusing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its leadership and by taking the aggression of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a screen for its servile, but active support to this illegal act, the Republic of Albania cannot hide its own direct responsibility for a gross violation of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter, as well as of all other internationally recognized legal acts of the contemporary legal order. There is abundant evidence to substantiate this fact.

1. The Republic of Albania is the only country in the world and the only Member State of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) that has officially recognized and actively supported the illegal separatist creation of the so-called Republic of Kosovo, proclaimed in the sovereign Yugoslav territory. Besides, it allowed that illegal creation to open its "representation" in Tirana. Albania has not recalled these decisions, which constitute a glaring example of the most flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the basic OSCE documents and principles.

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2. The Republic of Albania has purposefully shifted its own chaos and lawlessness onto the Albanian minority in the neighbouring Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, encouraging it to be disloyal to the State in which it lives. It is widely known that the Republic of Albania took an active part in creating and arming the terrorist/separatist so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). It transformed a large part of its territory into a KLA logistics base, a large-scale boot camp, as it were, for armed aggression and terror against civilians and Yugoslav security forces in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Albania's direct and profuse assistance to KLA terrorists and the refusal to secure its side of the Yugoslav-Albanian border and to prevent the terrorists, arms and drug smugglers and other armed criminals from crossing into the Yugoslav territory resulted in pogroms and genocide of the Serbs, Montenegrins and other non-Albanians of Kosovo and Metohija, the victims of which have often been the loyal Yugoslav citizens of Albanian ethnicity as well. President Meidani is conveniently silent about the enormous human losses and vast material damage caused by the policy of his country in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, for which he and his country bear direct responsibility. That policy is portrayed by President Meidani as a struggle for the protection of human rights.

3. The deployment of United Nations presences in the southern Serbian Province has not deterred the Republic of Albania from rendering support to terrorists. Confident of steady and continued support and assistance by neighbouring Albania, on the one hand, and encouraged by the tolerant attitude of KFOR and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), on the other, the KLA terrorists and other armed Albanian gangs continue their terror on a daily basis, aimed at ethnically cleansing the Province of the non-Albanian population. The fact that over 250,000 Serbs, Montenegrins, Roma, Turks and other non-Albanians have been driven out of the Province, that over 230 of them have been killed and that over 300 have been abducted, while tens of thousands of apartments and houses have been broken and moved into is telling evidence of who is responsible for the worrisome developments in Kosovo and Metohija.

4. The true face of the policy of the Republic of Albania towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its entire population regardless of national and/or religious background was laid bare by its direct support to, and participation in, the NATO aggression against the people of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in which thousands of civilians were killed and vast material damage was done. The Republic of Albania thus aligned itself with aggressors and those responsible for the international crime against humanity and the crime of genocide. The hauteur with which President Meidani trumpeted the support to, and the role of his country in, the crime without precedent in recent European history from the rostrum of the world organization may open the NATO door to Albania, but it will not, nor can it, free its leaders from responsibility for the crimes they have committed.

5. The statement of President Meidani was unapologetic and persistent in its consistency. This is further proof that the Albanian leadership, even though very vocal in calling for maintaining relations among the States of the region that would be based on democratic and other principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter, has not given up its retrograde ambitions and goals. This is particularly true of its active work towards realizing the project of Greater Albania at the expense of a number of the sovereign States of the Balkans, primarily the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. These aspirations were made crystal clear also by Albanian Prime Minister Paskal Majko who visited Pristina in the wake of the NATO aggression without ever bothering to abide by the relevant diplomatic procedure provided for by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and by his statement made upon return to Tirana to the effect that there was a need for establishing single educational and telecommunication infrastructure systems for all

Albanians irrespective of where they happened to live and for building a road link between Durres and Pristina as if the two cities were in the same State.

6. The policy of the Republic of Albania towards its neighbours, its transformation into a springboard for arms smuggling, illicit trade in narcotics and a safe haven for organized international crime and its unrestrained meddling in the situation in Kosovo and Metohija have made Albania into the greatest threat to peace in the Balkans and in Europe as a whole. Attempts to mask the fact by attacking others cannot be disguised, nor can the international community be hoodwinked by such attempts.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is committed to a policy of peaceful cooperation and good-neighbourly relations, based on strict respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference, and is open for the promotion of regional security and cooperation that it expects from every other nation of the region. The Republic of Albania can make a contribution to the achievement of these noble goals if it relinquishes its goals of creating Greater Albania and discontinues its support to terrorists, arms smugglers and traders in narcotic drugs and other criminal elements serving the ignoble cause of undermining the peace and security of the entire region.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 9.

(Signed) Vladislav **Jovanovic**
Chargé d'affaires, a.i.